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ABSTRACT

Findings of a study that examined patterns in coalition-building for school restructuring are presented in this paper, which focuses on the adoption and early implementation stages of educational change. A case study analysis of two high schools and one district involved in school restructuring was undertaken through site observation and interviews with five informants at each school. Interviewees were asked about the effect of the following roles--supervisor, district office administrator, local board member, teacher, teacher association member, principal, and state education agency--on the restructuring process. Findings suggest that no particular role exerted a major influence on restructuring efforts. That only one school utilized informal political coalition building fails to support Timar's (1986) model of integrated, political coalition-building. A suggestion is that national coalitions may provide an integrated approach to school improvement to replace the fragmented interest groups that dominate the state-level reform scene. (Contains 27 references.) (LMI)

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Exploring Political Coalitions in School Restructuring:

Results from the Field

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RESTRUCTURING SCHOOLS

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Study Purpose, Assumptions, and Research Questions

In this paper I report the restructuring attempts of two high schools and one district during the 1970s and early 1980s (Keedy, 1992). (The study was limited to the adoption and early implementation--not the maintenance--phases of restructuring.) I chose these pre-1986 restructuring attempts as **completed processes** because retrospection is needed to guage whether political coalitions were used, and, if so, under what circumstances.

Three assumptions undergird this study. First, coalition building among several advocacy groups is necessary in creating an integrated response to a need for restructuring.School observers are becoming increasingly aware that school restructuring has a crucial "political" dimension. School personnel need state, district, and community institutional support because public education advocacy groups are fragmented and factionalized (Timar, 1989). School sites cannot fight city hall alone.

Second, successful school restructuring (according to Timar, 1989; and Timar & Kirp, 1988) requires negotiated understandings among key representatives of various groups all with different organization needs. Informal negotiation among advocacy group leaders builds a united political agenda and acts as a catalyst initiating the restructuring process.

Restructuring requires a redefinition of traditional roles and responsibilities of teachers, administrators, parents, and so on (Murphy, 1991; Timar, 1989) and, therefore, is related to educational change. Fullan (1982, p. 41) defines educational change as: "...a process of coming to grips with the multiple [original emphasis] realities of the people who are the main participants in implementing change." Clark, Lotto, and Astuto (1984) conclude that change is affected by organizational choices of roles: Who will plan, carry out, evaluate, and so on. This study's third assumption is

that contributions are not unique to each role group, but instead represent endless configurations of actors taking on various functions. That all necessary functions are performed is the crucial factor--not who performs them (Loucks, Bauchner, Crandall, Schmidt, & Eiseman, 1982).

In this study I examined coalition building from the positional roles of superintendent, district office administrator, local board member, teacher, teacher association member, principal, and state education agency. Two questions were asked: 1) Who were the key players among these positional roles; and 2) What contributions did these key players make to the restructuring efforts of their schools?

In the across-case analysis I compare the findings with the political coalition and educational change assumptions outlined above. Do common pattern emerge among the three case analyses confirming these assumptions?: 1) Political coalition building occurred about how and why players should proceed with restructuring; and 2) Major contributions were not unique to positional roles but represented different constellations of roles performing the crucial functions in the restructuring process.

Procedure, Data Sources, Methodology

The reputation technique was used for the school selection. School restructuring-support organization representatives, e.g., Coalition of Essential Schools, Georgia's School Improvement Project, and League of Professional Schools Center for Educational Renewal, received a brief letter in which the study purpose and methodology were described. The researcher made follow-up calls to the appropriate contact persons, who nominated high schools. Schools, instead of districts, were projected as the unit of analysis since schools within the same district can interpret and manipulate district and state policies in substantially different ways. (See Timar & Kirp, 1988, for one California high school's reaction to a state mandate.) As it turned out, the third case was analyzed from the district perspective because of contextual

factors, e.g., a powerful superintendent mandating school restructuring district-wide.

Screening criteria of these nominated schools included: 1) principals of at least three-year tenures; 2) support and interest demonstrated by the prospective principals; and 3) an understanding by principals of this research project's potential affect on daily school operations. Murphy's (1991) school restructuring strategies comprised the selection criteria. The selected schools had to meet at least three of these criteria: 1) school-based management; 2) teacher empowerment; 3) student/parent choice; and 4) teaching for understanding. The three schools' principals then selected five research participants well-informed about the gameplayers in their district's SR efforts. Methodology consisted of a comparative, case study design (Hart, 1990). The study also had an interpretive, social interaction perspective. Organization member attitudes and norms are shaped far more by informal negotiation and interaction than by state and district rules and regulations. Each organization player has a perspective, often influenced by perceptions of others (Blumer, 1969; Denzin, 1978). Individuals are assumed to construct their own social reality ("insider perceptions"), rather than having objective reality determine individual perceptions (Erickson, 1986; Gage, 1988). The researcher's purpose was not simply to describe but to explore possible explanations for the phenomena studied. (For a similar intention, see Smylie & Denny, 1990.) Open-ended interview questions were asked rather than questions structured on preexisting hypotheses. Systematic thematic analysis (Plummer, 1983) was used in which the researcher slowly develops a series of themes subject to validation by the informants during the series of interviews. Using the comparative method of content analysis (Weber, 1985), study findings were grounded in the data themselves (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

In the conversational and open-interview format (Patton, 1990), each informant: 1) identified the key players, and 2) provided contextual information describing how

the players supported (or hindered) each school's SR efforts. Data collected in three-day site visits consisting of field notes from interviews were transcribed into a computer. The five perceptions of the seven positional roles were compared/ contrasted to identify the key players in each case (congruency among sources; Erickson, 1986). Interview perceptions were coded and placed on a matrix (Miles & Huberman, 1984) for final synthesis. The three case analyses were compared across-case for analytic generalizations (Yin, 1984).

Case Findings

Below are the three case synopses and matrixes. The data presentation format is: 1) case background; 2) synthesis of interview perceptions regarding positional roles; and 3) thematic analysis.

Smallwood High School (SHS):
The Mosquito That Would Never Go Away

Case Background

The social ferment of the 1970s was an essential dimension in the creation of Smallwood High School. In 1968-69, a small group of students at the neighboring East High School (EHS) in the downtown area of this northeastern city of 500,000 presented a proposal for an optional program (to be housed within EHS). While the local board was studying this proposal, a general faculty meeting was called at EHS to discuss teacher working conditions (October 1969). At this meeting most teachers (approximately 150 including teachers from throughout the district) were critical of the EHS administration because student unrest permeated the school. The school was chaotic. Students were not attending class; corridors were noisy and disruptive. They wanted more rules and stricter enforcement of those rules, e.g., better designed corridor passes. Six or seven teachers, however, blamed the repressive nature of

EHS. The problem was the system, not the students. These teachers wanted to design an alternative school whose teachers and students would embrace humane values, such as respect for individuals and fair play.

In 1970-71 these teachers (joined by several others), some parents, and the students who had proposed the school-within-a-school spearheaded the alternative school and politicked with the district office and local board. This informal, highly vociferous coalition pressured the board and superintendent into authorizing three alternative schools: an elementary, junior high, and high school. In February 1971 the school board resolved that Smallwood High School (SHS) be created. The board asked for a program director who could be released for teaching duties to "flesh out" the board proposal, e.g., hire teachers, set the curriculum, find a site, and enroll students. This person eventually became acknowledged by school officials as the principal. (He was not invited, however, to district-wide principals' meetings until several years after SHS was started.)

Analysis of Key Players in Restructuring Process

The five interviewee perceptions of the seven positional roles were compared for analysis. See Table 1 for the matrix.

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place Table 1 about here

The Superintendent. The Superintendent's role was viewed as either neutral or guardingly supportive. The superintendent was preoccupied with integration problems but perceived as influenced by the social movement culture. Politically, he could not afford to oppose the formation of alternative schools. Two interviewees

perceived him as an educational liberal who could have killed the program but instead provided logistical support in starting the school--once the board approved the resolution.

District Office. One interviewee perceived this group as generally adversarial. Many district officials were academic purists and wondered what kind of learning would go on in such an alternative school environment; other district administrators worried about compliance of regulations. The other four interviewees perceived district administrators as neutral--with the few exceptional administrators who helped keep the school going. The only real supporters were the assistant superintendent for instruction, the secondary school coordinator and a director of (secondary) English. The crucial dimension in this positional role was that there was always at least one administrator who looked out for the interests of SHS.

Local School Board. Three interviewees saw the board as neutral and preoccupied with integration. This board in general was progressive (liberal in context of 1970s) and integrated the district, according to two interviewees. The pivotal swing vote members on the board, however, did not actively support the school resolution but were pressured by certain teachers and community members.

Teachers. All five interviewees categorized teachers into two groups (in this case district wide). The first group was an extremely small but bright, articulate and committed group of teachers who, instead of blaming the administration and the students, chose to look at how schools were designed. These teachers wanted to start a school contrary to the prevalent school philosophy. The second group, the vast majority of teachers district wide, were viewed by three as neutral or not even aware that this new school was being started. Two interviewees perceived these teachers as hostile because most teachers district-wide were threatened by the critical perspective towards EHS as an institution.

Teacher Association. The teacher union was neutral. Collective bargaining occurred in this district. The twelve SHS teachers represented a very small minority within the teaching force in the city, and they were not threatening the union status quo. For instance, these teachers did not fight the seniority provision in the union contract, even though this clause often meant SHS would get older teachers with seniority rights transferring to SHS.

Principal. The principal was a main player in starting SHS. He kept the "maverick teachers" at SHS on track and committed to a common instructional and curriculum philosophy. Second, he protected the staff from outside forces.

State Education Agency. The SEA was not considered a gameplayer. The SEA did not even know the school was being formed because a neighboring high school (EHS) was the diploma granter until approximately four years ago (mid 1980s).

Thematic Analysis

A philosophical distillation process occurred, as school reform players whose dispositions were consistent with an alternative school naturally were interested in joining this informal coalition. The informal coalition consisted of parents, some students, student-oriented teachers (out of whom emerged a crafty principal) orchestrating community support with the help of a very few facilitative district administrators.

The superintendent and the board were preoccupied with integration. Yet the superintendent and some board members were philosophically progressive, and therefore predisposed to intense lobbying by teachers, principal, parents and students. With the SEA and this teacher association essentially neutral gameplayers, the path was clear for the highly committed and well organized group to get a resolution passed by the board. The coalition's political machinations also should be viewed in the context of community-wide pressure since an elementary and a junior high also

were initiated. The pressure was put on the board, and therefore, the superintendent was bypassed. The superintendent was not an active and supportive gameplayer until the board was pressured. Neither the board nor the superintendent expected the school to survive: By passing the resolution they defused the machinations of this vociferous school advocacy group. If the school got off the ground, it was a feather in upper management's (district, board) caps. If the school floundered and disappeared, it was not their problem. SHS, however, never did go away, and currently has 12 teachers and 150 students (1990).

Fairview High School (FHS): Escaping from the Spider's Trap of the Effective Schools Movement

Case Background

FHS was a suburban/urban school of 1700 students in a large southeastern city. The district had been a pioneer in implementing site-based management (SBM) in the early 1980s. According to several interviewees, however, the decision making areas were insignificant, e.g., cheerleader uniforms and school mascot.

The white superintendent, influenced by the Effective Schools Movement, claimed that all students could achieve regardless of background and race. He apparently used the Effective Schools Movement as a way of surviving extreme racial opposition from certain board members (early 1980s). As FHS Principal Jones reflected, "The board was very supportive of the Effective Schools Movement. The average lay person could be convinced by this movement and by national Effective School scholars." The Effective Schools Movement enabled the superintendent to convince a board (consisting of two blacks and three whites) that the district would be able to increase the achievement of minority students.

Students were taught in the direct instruction and lecture modes, and expected to memorize facts and bubble in correct answers on district-wide standardized tests.

The standardized curriculum consisted of unit tests and a district wide test bank. Students took the same tests district wide, so ideally a student receiving an "A" at FHS would also get an "A" at another high school. The test bank, hypothetically, eliminated racial bias. The emphasis was on basic skills with little emphasis on writing, student-oriented instruction, and student-directed projects. Many art, music, and drama courses were eliminated. This curriculum standardization encouraged mediocrity by concentrating on basic skills to the detriment of critical thinking skills and the fine arts at FHS. Curriculum and instruction standardization logically lowered the standards for high-achieving students (primarily of middle and upper socioeconomic status)--regardless of race--who apparently had been accustomed to extensive in-class writing, alternative readings, and essay tests.

In 1987 a black woman became school board chair. This appointment accelerated the district's racial focus. The black board members became even more powerful and increased their control over the superintendent. The board president publicly referred to FHS as a "university": FHS was getting too much equipment, extra teachers, and so on. Otherwise, how could FHS students out-perform all other high school students in the district? District officials did not want to see one high school excel because such an exception would counter the Effective Schools Movement. Therefore every attempt was made to withhold recognition from FHS. Blacks comprised 70% of the district-wide student body; FHS was 67% white and 32% black at the time to this study.

Jones, who had a ten-year tenure, was a risk-taker, partly because he came from a wealthy background and did not have to work. In 1989 he convened a district-wide principals meeting to protest (unsuccessfully) the centralized accounting system "downtown". (Because of overdrawn accounts at some schools, district administrators at the time of this study counter-signed all checks.) Jones had decided to take early

retirement after the 1990-91 year. "No one downtown ever has backed us."

Analysis of Key Players in Restructuring Process

The five interviewee perceptions of the seven positional roles were compared for analysis. See Table 2 for the matrix. Whereas district officials might have viewed restructuring as limited SBM, FHS personnel perceived restructuring in an entirely different context: a school-based initiative for curriculum and instruction decisions.

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place Table 2 about here

Superintendent. Generally, the superintendent was viewed as unfavorable towards restructuring (as FHS personnel defined this term). According to these informants, effective schools meant standardization at the district office with consistent achievement among all students district-wide. Otherwise, if all students can achieve, how could one school's students out achieve other schools' students? Three informants did see a limited value of the shared decision making, but two of these perceived decisions as limited to dress code, extra curricular activity guidelines, and cheerleader selection.

District Office. District office administrators lacked a separate identity from that of their superintendent; they followed the superintendent's party line. Because FHS had higher -achieving students, district officials did not actively interfere with the school. Jones, however, had to fight for FHS resources. He occasionally went over his superior's head (the Director of Secondary Education) to the Deputy Superintendent who functioned as his point man. One informant did see the district office helpful in curriculum.

Local Board. The board was seen as being either a negative influence or neutral. The board chair after 1987 was seen as a major force in limiting FHS in terms of resource procurement. According to one informant, the board perceived the Effective Schools Movement as a way of increasing the achievement of lower SES students.

Teachers. All but one informant saw the teachers as a powerful influence in FHS progress toward restructuring. Generally, these teachers were dedicated to their teaching and very much aware that the Effective Schools Movement caused many students to be complacent. (Students could take the unit tests as many times as they wanted to attain the 70% "passing score"). Many teachers were major players in forming honors courses and advanced placement courses in which students could be challenged academically. They also wrote functional curriculum for the slower learners.

Teacher Associations. Unanimously, no informants saw this as a powerful force (collective bargaining was illegal in this district).

Principal. Unanimously, the principal was perceived as a major gameplayer in restructuring. One informant perceived that he bucked the system and supported his teachers. FHS seemed to have a norm that teachers continue to be flexible with their students, who should work on the areas they needed as opposed to forced coverage of material linked to district-wide standardized tests. Jones was seen as a gatekeeper protecting his teachers from excessive paperwork and from teaching to specific objectives.

State Education Agency. SEA players had no influence on the restructuring process at FHS. The school district had been a state leader in the Effective Schools Movement, and the SEA essentially did not interfere.

Thematic Analysis.

The principal, certain teachers, and one highly supportive district administrator were analyzed as the major SR gameplayers. FHS's restructuring efforts (1985-1991) were achieved despite a superintendent, a racially-divided board, and a district office all committed to the standardized curriculum and central control of the Effective Schools ideology (early 1980s). Jones and the teachers reorganized curricula around student higher-level thinking needs, cooperative learning groups, and computer labs for essay writing and student-centered instruction. FHS personnel instituted advanced placement and honors courses--not subject to district-wide tests--as ways to circumvent standardized district tests. (According to one interviewee, FHS had more advanced placement courses than the other seven high schools combined.) FHS personnel also upgraded their fine arts program and integrated computers into their classroom teaching. FHS students, whose SES was no higher than its rival McKinley High School, continually out performed all district schools on semi-merit finalists merit scholars, SAT, and ACT tests.

Because FHS had originally been a rural community school (before consolidation with the city system in 1980), there were personal ties between teachers and students. Many of the teachers at FHS had grown up in the county and had attended FHS. These teachers were hard working and sponsored many extra curricular activities that involved the students at FHS regardless of race. As one interviewee observed, "We have all the organized input we need from the community and considerable support. When we considered not having the Colonial Classic [an annual drama activity], the community put extreme pressure on us to keep this tradition going. We are one of two high schools in the district which have continued this activity."

In this case study the Effective Schools and school restructuring movements

appear antithetical. Although this district in the early 1980s had a national reputation as a pioneer in SBM, FHS interviewees perceived SBM as a political ploy by the superintendent to have input from the teachers and administrators in exchange for compliance to Effective Schools standardization. Perhaps SBM was a central office manipulation to provide the appearance of school-based decision making as a compensation for district-controlled curriculum. Contextually, restructuring at FHS was a school empowerment process in which FHS teachers circumvented the district-established minimum expectations because their students were not being challenged, e.g., critical thinking skills. One interviewee explained, "We are a self motivated staff because the district does not want us to excel over the other seven district high schools. [Because of the district politics] we had to work harder to get the things we did get. We were judged in [extra-curricular] competition a lot tougher because many folks did not want FHS students to excel--given both the effective schools movement and the racial and political overtones of the district."

Bluehill Unified School District (BUSD):
A Superintendent Ahead of His Time

Case Background

BUSD, a suburban/urban school district of 20,000 students, was located in the far west. As part of a district considered a national forerunner of school-based management, its restructuring must be viewed from a district perspective. School restructuring was a district-wide phenomena, and not site specific. Seawold, the district superintendent, in the early 1970s envisioned that technology could be a leader in school management: Student performance was the cornerstone in the accountability system. "The computer enables us to manipulate the data and find needs." Seawold introduced accountability to BUSD and the rest of the district largely through computers used to track major subject learning objectives. He also introduced

school based management as a complementary process: "If you are going to coach the San Francisco Giants, you as the manager should have both the responsibility and the accountability. I'm not concerned with the methods and content. These belong to the practitioners who have ownership. It's the goals that are mine."

The governing board representing the community and the superintendent set specific and measurable goals in five categories each year: curricular, co-curricular, community involvement, school management and other quality indicators. The district-wide accountability model advisory committee made up of administrators, teachers, and parents reviewed and commented on goal statements--an evaluation process subject to school board approval. The goals handbook, which clearly stated the goals and success indicators, was distributed to all school administrators. Measurable criteria included student tests, e.g., the California Assessment Program, the SAT/ACT and advanced placement tests; building maintenance; student attendance; vandalism; energy consumption; and team success in athletic contests and other co-curricular contests, e.g., band, chorus, debate.

Progress toward goals was monitored systematically and frequently for each school in three ways. First, district-generated data functioned as feedback to principals and enhanced site decision making relative to curriculum resources and program priorities. Second, the data also contributed to a School Report Card and School Rating issued at the end of the school year. Parents were involved through participation in a School Assessment Review Team (SART) chosen from each school and comprised of parents, teachers, and the principal. The team assessed school climate in five areas each year. Third, within-district competition provided the motivational tool with site administrators and teachers responsible and accountable for achieving district-set goals. Schools were compared with each other on the basis of a quantifiable point system including student achievement, advanced placement test

scores, and extra- curricular competition.

Method and content were the domain of school sites. Principals and their staffs developed their own site plans for attainment of goals. Each school site operated with a budget and personnel units based on average daily attendance. Principals recruited and hired their own teaching and clerical staffs. Regarding curriculum, teachers basically made school site decisions. No textbooks were mandated. Teachers did not have to use textbooks as long as the students achieve the instructional objectives.

Seawold maintained a relatively lean central office staff. The staff was reorganized into two vertical strands each of which contained several elementary schools, one or two middle schools and one high school. Curriculum directors housed at the central office were nonexistent. Instead, these staff slots were used in the schools.

Analysis of Key Players in Restructuring Process

The five interviewee perceptions of the seven positional roles were compared for analysis. See Table 3 for the matrix.

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place Table 3 about here

Superintendent. All five interviewees viewed Seawold as the key player in this district's restructuring. His vision (school site accountability and autonomy) was so student-centered that political opposition was minimal. Who could oppose such a lofty ideal? Seawold had discovered that only 40% of the Bluehill district read on grade level. "I framed the goal [90% of grade 8 students would read on grade level] in such a

way that everyone had to support it." As a great salesperson, Seawold also ensured that principals would be paid well and that teachers would have the autonomy to make curricular and instructional decisions and not merely be dispensers of information.

District Office. District administrators were seen unanimously as supportive of the SBM process, e.g., helping to set and assess goals. District administrators occasionally would call if they heard of certain teacher dissatisfactions. One interviewee was unable to separate the central office from the superintendent because they presented a united front. District administrators might have been subservient ("They licked his boots" and were brought in by Seawold, according to one interviewee.)

Local board. Since Seawold had brought about a tricky consolidation of three districts (in the 1960s), he had considerable status with the board and community. The board also consisted of older, successful businessmen who believed that the accountability system would make teachers work harder. The board was supportive because they trusted the superintendent; with school autonomy decisions were made closest to the students. The superintendent also assumed responsibility for his decisions: "If I cannot meet our goals [of student achievement], I am getting out of public education."

Teachers. Although the accountability model was designed for teacher school-site autonomy, teachers were not major players. They were essentially neutral players--either scared of losing their jobs if their students did poorly on achievement tests, or offered no resistance because they thought the grade 8 learning goal impossible. Some logically might have seen themselves as empowered (making decisions closest to students on clearly described student objectives). The district-wide faculty senate also might have empowered some of the major teacher leaders, and coopted potentially teacher association players.

Teacher Associations. The three administrators, the principal, assistant superintendent, and superintendent saw teacher associations as having no major influence because Bluehill district did not have collective bargaining.

Principal. Principals were seen as neutral players during the implementation phase: either as "yes men," screened by the superintendent for receptivity to SBM, or simply intimidated. The superintendent stated at a district-wide principal's meeting: "I am going to achieve [our] goals or I am getting out and taking some of you with me."

State Education Agency. SEAs were not players at all.

Thematic Analysis

The superintendent conceptualized school based management, competition, and the accountability model with support or the rubber stamp of the school board. The central office was analyzed as being goal setters and assessors for SBM, but accountable to the superintendent. Principals were viewed as working for the superintendent and hired for their receptivity to SBM. Teachers as a group were not viewed as players in the adoption and early implementation of this restructuring effort. They were perceived, however, as major players in curriculum and instruction and as collegial decision makers with administrators and each other (a process following adoption of this SR model). Teacher associations and the SEA were seen as generally superfluous.

This analysis should be viewed from the context of the early 1970s. As the first (and only) superintendent, Seawold had engineered a successful school consolidation in the 1960s and had the advantage of consistent growth in student enrollment. Seawold's vision of using the computer and indexing student achievement to performance objectives was not novel in the 1970s. The potential of the computer to provide system-wide efficiency and effectiveness was highly regarded; one thinks of Luverne Cunningham's 1965 prediction of the technocratic school

manager. (See Cibulka, Mawhinney, & Paquette, 1991.) The combination of a computerized accountability system and school autonomy (decision making in budget, personnel, curriculum, instruction), however, was an achievement. This playoff between accountability and school autonomy was the product of an insightful superintendent with a regional reputation for excellent management skills and a supportive board that wanted academic results and did little political meddling. Seawold was largely a one-person show because he had formed a clear vision providing a consistent basis for his actions.

Across-Case Comparisons and Analytic Generalizations

Several comparisons can be made for each of the research questions (below).

Did certain positional roles exert major influence in these three restructuring efforts?

No clear pattern can be identified among positional roles. SHS players were the principal (a teacher cadre member) and certain teachers supported by a vociferous group of parents all united over issues of pedagogy and student-centered values. The FHS actors also were the principal and certain teachers (supported by community members). The contexts, however, were different: SHS was started as an alternative school; FHS restructuring was a successful reaction to the standardized curriculum and testing imposed by a superintendent and board representing the Effective Schools Movement.

The superintendents and boards in these two districts were not major players. At SHS the superintendent and board were pressured into passing a resolution founding the school. At FHS the superintendent and board comprised the opposition for a school's efforts to provide an appropriate education for its students.

At BUSD the major player was the superintendent, who accomplished district-wide SR, and was supported by a non-meddling board apparently satisfied with the SBM and school outcomes management system. District and building-level administrators

largely were screened and hired by Seawold. Teachers were not key players.

This lack of consistency in positional roles confirms the findings of Loucks, Bauchner, Crandall, Schmidt, & Eiseman (1982): Endless constellations of actors exclusive of positional roles can perform crucial functions.

Did Political Coalition Building among Advocacy Groups Occur?

Only SHS can be interpreted as using a coalition in the restructuring process. Informal negotiation among teachers and parents committed to student-centered learning and values of democratic citizenship produced an informal coalition which weathered several board and superintendent attempts to "kill off the school."

Why was SHS the only school to use an informal "coalition"? The answer may lie with the political contexts of these three SR attempts. Only in SHS was a school started as a response to dissatisfaction with existing school conditions. Teachers, parents (and some students) committed to the alternative school movement of the 1970s were influenced to become coalition members. Informal negotiation about the purposes of "restructuring" occurred among these players and occasionally between coalition liaisons and the few board members predisposed to this educational philosophy. The principal was originally a coalition teacher member who drafted the school proposal used by the board to approve the existence of SHS. Essentially a lead teacher since he also taught classes, this teacher was empowered by the board to hire the teachers, write the curricula, and enroll students for SHS's first year. This teaching principal represented the school and teachers, and was not a middle manager obligated to district office priorities of hierarchical control.

Implications and Current Directions of School Restructuring

Lack of across-case agreement on positional roles of the restructuring players is not surprising for two reasons. First, educational change in general does not support specific positional roles as pivotal in successful school change (Loucks et al.; David,

1990). Second, the political contexts surrounding these schools were substantially different: alternative school and social ferment of Vietnam and civil rights (Smallwood High School); the Effective Schools Movement and racial politics (Fairview High School);and the techno-rational "computer systems" district-wide management approach (Bluehill Unified School District).

Neither is any consistency found when these coalition-building attempts are compared with Timar's integrated response model. According to Timar, an agreement first is made between the superintendent and board (integrated response from the "top"). District administrators then provide the support (resources, staff development) to schools. Principals are coaches, not foremen, as they work with their teachers to implement SR goals, e.g., site-based management, shared decision making.

The BUSD restructuring process approximates Timar's model. The superintendent and board demonstrated the initial active support. District administrators played facilitative roles and helped principals and teachers translate district goals into action plans at both the school and classroom levels. FHS, on the other hand, achieved restructuring despite a local board and superintendent committed to standardized curriculum and testing, and district lack of support and resources. SHS represents a mix between FHS and BUSD. SHS lacked the board and superintendent active opposition of FHS, and had some support among a few board members, but certainly lacked the board-supported mandate occurring at BUSD.

Little vertical, integrated response, consisting of SEA, LEA, central office, principal, and teacher players, all united to a common purpose and providing widely-based coalitions emerged out of this sample. SEAs, for instance, were not major players. Nor did teacher professional organizations provide state or national-level organization support. BUSD had "top"-generated support (superintendent; board);

SHS and FHS "bottom"-generated support (principal; teachers). That these three cases accomplished their restructuring in the 1970s and early 1980s without an integrated vertical response may be considered impressive.

An important implication is the current possibility of a "national system" of education era in which the needs for global economic competitiveness and citizenship transcend district interests. (See Guthrie, 1991.) The national coalitions may provide an integrated approach to school improvement and replace the fragmented and often competing self-interest groups dominating the current state-level reform scene observed by Timar. Three examples of these national coalitions follow. In August 1991, the New American Schools Development Council (NASDC), a nonprofit firm with a mission to support research-and-development competition, sponsored a conference for the exchange of new ideas to revitalize America's schools. Consulting firms, school districts, think tanks, universities, and consortia later would compete for research-and-development contracts to design the 535 new generation American schools (Rothman, 1991).

Second, the Coalition of Essential Schools (CES) formed a coalition with the Educational Commission of the States (ECS) in the mid 1980s out of which the Re: Learning Project emerged. CES currently is considering joining forces with three other school redesign organizations: the School Development Project (with James Comer at Yale University), Project Zero (with Howard Gardner at Harvard University), and the Educational Development Center of Newton, Massachusetts (speech by Ted Sizer, CES Fall Forum, November 7, 1991). Third, the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) was funded through corporate sponsors and foundations. Federal funds also might be used to support the NBPTS (Miller & Diegmueller, 1991). This coalition representing an organizational mix between public and private sectors characterizes this Age of National Coalitions.

Whether these national coalitions can forge vertical, integrated responses to restructuring will be played out within the next decade. Given the fragile political infrastructures in two of the three cases described in this paper, however, some systemic approach (at either the state or national level) is necessary if school restructuring is to make a vital contribution to school reform.

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Table 1
Interviewee Perspectives: Smallwood High School

++ very influential
+ influential
- adversarial
o neutral

ROLE	former ASI	former director of instruct.	former principal	teacher (John)	teacher (Joe)
SUPT. o/+	o preoccupied with integration; due to parent pressure on board, "bought" into Title III concept.	o [grass roots movement] assumed would go away; certainly didn't oppose new school's resolution.	+/o an educational leader who delegated project to district ASI and could have killed the program but did not.	o reacted to highly vocal parent group; district then could take credit if project succeeded.	+ first to suggest opening a school (as opposed to program within EHS); provided support Parkway, PA; delegated to district office responsibility for supporting SHS.
DISTRICT OFFICE o/+	- academic purists--went along after superintendent pressured by board. How could regulations be enforced? Most did not understand experimental curriculum.	o only Director of English philosophically supportive.	o only ASI and Director of English supportive; these two were only lifeline to SHS.	o some supportive; some did not care; none actively against.	o only administrators at Director level pedagogically supportive.
LOCAL BOARD +/o	o pressured by group of parents who worked on 4 of 7 board members; these 4 became major gameplayers only as result of pressure.	o consumed by integration and related school reorganization.	o not involved until proposal hit local board; then several became supportive because board was progressive by nature.	+ supportive because board was progressive and did not perceive SHS as "black panthers".	+ supportive because of its innovative and risk-taking nature.
TEACHERS ++	o/+ small, vociferous teacher cadre basically did crucial "legwork",e.g., curriculum, many teachers perceived high school as racist.	o/+ small cadre supported SHS philosophically. Most other teachers did not even know about SHS movement.	o/+ most teachers district-wide hostile towards SHS because it challenged nature of public schools; 6/7 teachers "ran point" & spear-headed the movement.	o/+ most teachers did not know or understand that screening process ensured that teachers would be philosophically compatible.	-/+ some (very few) teachers represented "grass roots" movement; most teachers advocated more repressive measures for students.
TEACHER ASSOCIA-TIONS o	o no affect.	o SHS teachers did not rock boat to jeopardize union contract.	o not a player.	o nothing.	o concerned about possible court order.
PRINCIPAL ++	+ main driving force (especially organizing for first year of operation).	+ kept group of "maverick" teachers on track; if principal had pulled out, SHS would have collapsed.	+ released from teaching assignment by board to flesh out resolution, e.g., hire teachers, curriculum.	+ incredible thinker; faith in people; he got his way by making most persuasive argument.	+ protected staff from outside forces (which helped SHS survive).
STATE EDUCATION AGENCY o-	o did not even know SHS existed. (East High School gave diplomas until 1986).	o non-commital, partly because of "block school" controversy.	- certification dept. tried to squash SHS--but principal sent rebuttal and everything got lost in paper-shuffle.	o officials considered SHS, if anything, too small to make a difference.	o did not even know SHS existed.

23

Table 2

Interviewee Perspectives: Fairview High School

++ very supportive
+ influential
- adversarial
o neutral

ROLE	Principal	Jane	Carol	Tim	Judy
SUPT. -	- catered towards less achieving students; oriented towards basic skills; students taught to fill in bubbles.	- with previous superintendent (1972-90) standardization from central office + mandated a limited SDM, e.g., dress code, extra curricular activities guidelines, cheer leaders.	+ superintendent started SDM at both district (helped write student policies) & school levels (dress code, student organizations).	- superintendent wanted everything equal; FHS told to back up--we're making others look bad; couldn't afford to have FHS do well because superintendent was white.	- CBOK, computers, shared governance his "brain-child"; CAI planned before he retired - nothing re: SR.
DISTRICT OFFICE o/-	+/- did not want one high school to excel because ES meant students achieve; had to fight for everything; kept hands off FHS (higher caliber of students); deputy SI my "point man."	o no separate identity from superintendent.	+ helped us with curriculum development, e.g., computer applications.	- followed party line of superintendent.	- played to superintendent's tune.
LOCAL BOARD -	o very supportive of ES movement; they had superintendent who wanted to increase achievement of lower SES.	- animosity between board and teachers (teachers did not know until contract time that 10 extra days added to work year).	+ big supporters of middle school concept that could relate to SR; pushed for flexible scheduling for students working during the day.	- blacks very powerful & controlled superintendent; he played up to them too much; board president: "They have a university down there" (FHS gets too much).	- meddled in racial matters, e.g., mascot, rebel flag; since 1987 board not pro-FHS.
TEACHERS ++	+ teachers attended AP workshops; wrote functional curriculum for slower kids.	+ teaching styles of many teachers conducive to group work and computers.	+ teachers make many decisions (class plays, number of students to be enrolled versus open enrollment; dress code; electives).	- "We are a unique mix of teachers and students as close-knit community school; many teachers continued to teach beyond district-mandated tests because many students became complacent."	o mixed (some teachers traditional); other teachers very SR-oriented because they devote lots of their time and push individual students.
TEACHER ASSOCIATIONS o	o no influence.	o no effect.	o none.	o basically weak (traditionally Southern).	o very limited.
PRINCIPAL ++	+ rebuilt curriculum (honors & AP courses); principals in district had some autonomy (only answered to superintendent and assistant superintendent).	+ bucked system ("we're going to do it our way"); encouraged teaching higher level thinking skills; "open-door" policy for teachers.	+ very supportive and attentive, e.g., piloting computer applications course.	+ valuable player in our unofficial SR; backed flexibility between teachers and students when it "works"; students should work on areas they need to work on; networked with teacher groups re: instruction & curriculum.	+ very supportive of teachers' ideas to improve student learning.
STATE EDUCATION AGENCY o	o SHS was forerunner in state in ES and common body of knowledge.	o nothing.	o neutral.	o essentially none.	o 1980s reform movement threw "monkey wrench" into their ES implementation. Therefore, no effect whatsoever.

Interviewee Perspectives: Bluehill Unified School District

++ very supportive
+ influential
- adversarial
o neutral

ROLE	Principal	District Librarian Coord.	Media Center Librarian	Assistant Superintendent	Superintendent
SUPT. ++	+ enabled principals to be accountable to competitive model. Empowered principal to empower staffs. Personally instigated staff and teacher classes to be student-centered.	+ wanted to leave behind legacy of students as lifetime learners.	+ Superintendent mandated accountability model; he was a great salesman; paid administrators "big bucks" to produce results in student academic and extra-curricular achievement.	+ Supt. had vision, i.e., providing accountability and autonomy (which prins. passed down to teachers). So far ahead of others, how could one not follow him? His vision built around corporate cultures (he did not need all the credit).	+ "I framed goal in such a way that everyone had to support it.' "Board and I set goal (90% of grade 8 students will read on grade level)." "We set goals; method and content belong to practitioners."
DISTRICT OFFICE +	+ Supportive of superintendent's vision. Set up 3 K-12 clusters w/ a central office administrator in charge of each to increase competition.	+ unable to separate central office from superintendent, e.g., teacher release time to visit other schools, library consultant.	+ "They all polished his boots" because he paid great salaries and benefits. Superintendent brought them all in (early 1960s).	+ supt. set up mini districts that worked along with him as players.	+ Their roles were goal setting and assessment.
LOCAL BOARD +	+/- Traditionally percieved as "rubber stamp" but really supported, hired & backed supt.	o head librarian & superintendent reported their advocacy plan to board; without being informed they could turn on superintendent.	+ He had pulled off a tricky 3-district consolidation; so why buck him? They were all in tune with supt. (older, successful businessmen who thought competition model would make teachers work harder).	+ After initial tough times, became stable and did its arguing in closed session. Supt. established trust with board because decisions made closest to students. The SART program helped sell supt.'s vision to public at large.	+ "They initially supported me (how could they not with such a profesisonal goal as student achievement?) Once committe they had to be supportive; they trusted supt. to provide good administration."
TEACHERS o	+ Empowered by administrators who did "dirty work" of discipline. Teachers wrote curriculum and chose texts.	No Information (NI)	o General fear among teachers that they would be fired or sent to alternative high school if their students did not do well on achievement tests.	o most bought into accountability model because student outcomes specified by competition model; only a few saboteurs wanted collective bargaining.	o They thought supt.'s goal wa impossible to achieve; so they offered no resistance; then one grade 1 teacher achieved 90% goal and this put pressure on other teachers.
TEACHER ASSOCIATIONS o	o Not unionized. Teacher representatives--elected by peers--meet with board on a meet-and-confer basis.	NI	o Supt. always gave teachers slight % higher salary than neighboring districts; district-wide faculty senate perceived as partnership with district administrator and board.	o never could establish a power base.	o District did not have a collective bargaining unit.
PRINCIPAL o	+ perceived himself as empowered by superintendent, e.g., allowed to maximize personnel ratios.	NI	o Other than one (who returned to classroom) they were all "yes" men.	o Supt. screened principals for their receptivity to SBM; principals were vital to corporate culture and those without common vision influenced by peer pressure (especially when their schools were falling behind competitors).	o "Principals thought we did well exceeding state student achievement scores (40% vs. 37%). I told them, 'I'm going to achieve [our] goals or I'm gettin out and taking some of you with me.'"
STATE EDUCATION AGENCY o	o nothing	NI	o Not a player at all.	o Their resources and energy distracted by state-level politics, e.g., governors Brown and Reagan.	o They were not players at all.

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